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Questions and Answers Regarding Recent Changes to the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Program

What are federal unemployment benefits?

During periods of high unemployment in a state, Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) and Extended Benefits (EB) may become available to workers who have exhausted their regular state unemployment benefits. Historically, the EUC program provided up to 53 weeks of UI benefits and the EB program provided up to 20 weeks of UI benefits. Both programs are funded by the federal government. Currently, just the EUC program is available to claimants who have exhausted their regular state unemployment benefits. The EB program ended with the week ending Feb. 18, 2012.

What criterion is used to qualify states for the EUC program?

With the most recent federal legislation authorized by Congress and President Obama, the EUC program has been extended until week ending Dec. 29, 2012. However, the maximum number of benefit weeks available through the EUC program will be gradually reduced through Sept. 2, 2012. Additionally, the federal government established unemployment rate thresholds that the state must meet in order to remain eligible for the EUC program. In Michigan, the total unemployment rate (TUR) must be at a certain percentage (based on a three month average) for the state to remain eligible for EUC. For general purposes, the state's three month average TUR must remain at 9% or above to be eligible to provide all four tiers of the EUC program.

How many claimants are currently receiving unemployment benefits through Michigan's Unemployment Insurance Agency?

As of March 16, 2012, approximately 250,795 claimants are receiving benefits in Michigan. This includes individuals receiving regular state unemployment benefits and Emergency Unemployment Compensation.

How many claimants are currently receiving federal unemployment benefits through the EUC program? How are they immediately affected by this recent legislation?

Approximately 99,856 claimants are collecting EUC Benefits. EUC claimants must submit documentation of their work searches to the UIA prior to biweekly certifying through MARVIN or MARVIN Online. Individuals are required to report the details and results of their work search to UIA by completing and submitting the UIA 1583 EUC Work Search Requirement form.

How are claimants entering EUC Tiers 1 and 2 directly affected by recent legislation?

Individuals who are entering Tiers 1 or 2 of the EUC program are required to report in-person to a local Michigan Works! office for reemployment services.

How will EUC Tier 4 claimants be immediately affected by recent legislation?

There are 10,291 individuals currently receiving unemployment benefits on EUC Tier 4. Each will be eligible to receive up to 16 weeks of benefits. This means the total number of potentially available benefit weeks for EUC Tier 4 increased from six to 16. From June 1, 2012, through Sept. 2, 2012, the maximum number of benefit weeks available on EUC Tier 4 will be six. After Sept. 2, 2012 through the end of the year, the maximum number of benefit weeks available on EUC Tier 4 will be up to 10.

How can a claimant determine how many weeks of benefits he/she will receive?

Claimants can access this information online through their Claimant Web Account or call MARVIN (Michigan Automated Response Voice Interactive Network) at 1-866-638-3993 and select Option 2.

How are the federal programs funded?

The federal government funds the EUC program. Michigan employers are not charged for any EUC benefits paid to claimants.

When is the last week payable for EUC benefits?

The last week payable for the EUC program will be week ending Dec. 29, 2012.

What should claimants do if they will soon exhaust their EUC benefits?

Unemployed workers with online web accounts with the UIA can check their "Benefit Payment History" for information about their remaining weeks of benefits. Workers who have not established online accounts can call MARVIN at 1-866-638-3993 and press option 2. Additional information about the end of EUC will be posted on the UIA website (www.michigan.gov/uia). In addition, the Agency has established a toll-free telephone number 1-866-MI-HELPS (1-888-644-3577) for people to call for pre-recorded information about the extension program and their remaining benefits. Individuals can visit www.mitalent.org for job and training information.